

## Barrier Lessons with Valsirenn

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## Barrier Lessons with Valsirenn

by [TonalModulator](#)

### Summary

Altmer culture puts great value on politeness and Proper behavior, sometimes at the cost of educating the younger generations about certain...more difficult topics. The Collge of Psijics, with its predominantly Altmer student body, tries to rectify this by pulling aside budding couples for lessons in safety. Somehow, Valsirenn ended up with this job.

### Notes

I've had this in the back of my mind for a while as a kind of funny and not very serious thing. Basically I've never really heard of fantasy condoms or equivalent in the Elder Scrolls universe, but I figured, hey, Morrowind-style barrier spells exist. So I ran with it.

This fits in after chapter 3 or 4 of my other fic, "By Azura, They were Roommates!", but if you haven't read it, all you really need to know is that it's about when Sotha Sil and Divayth Fyr were in the College of Psijics (way back in the day), and they're dating.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Having just finished their lunch, Sotha Sil and Divayth Fyr walked hand-in-hand across the courtyard to the academic building that housed their next class. The chill Sun's Dusk breeze gave them an excuse to huddle closer together as they went.

"Ready for more of Leythen's Linguistics?" Divayth asked. Their afternoon class was a first-year

seminar instructed by a rotating cast of more senior Psijics who would each spend a few sessions introducing their topic of interest. The current unit was being taught by an Altmer named Leythen who specialized in decoding languages most people had never heard of.

"I admit, I am finding it interesting. Did you notice that he wrote one of the books on Ehlnohex that we were referencing back at the beginning of the year?"

"Ah, I knew I recognized his name from somewhere!"

As they approached the classroom, they saw Leythen in the corridor, engaged in conversation with his wife, Valsirenn, another Altmer and professor at the College. They smiled and nodded in greeting, not wanting to interrupt the conversation, as they reached the entrance to the classroom.

"Actually, gentlemer, you're with me today," Valsirenn said, stopping them before they could go inside.

They paused, and then stepped away from the door to follow Valsirenn. Noticing their looks of confusion and concern, she added, "Oh, don't worry; you're not in trouble. We just have a separate lesson plan for you today."

"Have fun!" Leythen called after them as Val began to lead them down the hall. She restrained herself from rolling her eyes—lovingly—at her husband's teasing. They both knew this was one of the more uncomfortable parts of her job. She wasn't even sure how she had ended up with it, other than that she was probably the professor that students generally trusted the most, and she often found herself in an unofficial mentor position.

Their destination was a classroom two doors down that was not currently being used. "I'm sorry about all this formality; it's just College policy," Val said as they entered the room and made their way to one of the tables to sit down. "We find that our students come from such varied backgrounds that it's best to make sure everyone gets lessons in this area when it's important."

Divayth glanced at Sil, trying to determine whether he had any idea what "this area" was, but Sil looked just as confused.

Once they were seated, Val began the lesson. "Now, I assume you're both familiar with barrier spells, correct?" The boys nodded. "Of course you are. Entry-level alteration, right? Could you cast one?"

It was indeed entry-level alteration, probably the most basic defensive spell. Cautiously, as if unsure if this was a test, they each cast a barrier, creating a shimmering bubble around them.

Val tapped on each one lightly. They were solid, as if made of infinitely thin glass.

"Excellent. Those are strong, classic barriers. You may dispel them."

They obeyed.

"Today, we'll be focusing on the ways that barrier spells can be modified for different purposes," she explained. "The classic barrier spell is well-suited to combat." She pulled up a nearby training dummy and cast a classic barrier on it. "These barriers are rigid"—she poked at the barrier to prove her point—"and they leave a bit of wiggle room so that if it should break"—she conjured a bound quarterstaff and smacked the barrier, causing it to crack and poof out of existence—"you'll have some space to get out of the way."

She dispelled the staff. "Outside of combat, however, rigidity is not always desirable. Luckily,

using Psijic insight, we can understand the barrier before we cast it, and use that knowledge to influence its malleability."

Valsirenn cast another barrier on the dummy. This time, the barrier dented when she poked at it, and sprung back into place when released.

"Try casting another barrier, as strong as the last, but flexible," she instructed.

Though not quite as simple as a basic barrier spell, the two students quickly managed the task.

"Good. With a flexible barrier, it becomes feasible to adjust the size and shape. Rather than casting a wide bubble, you can fit the barrier to...your target." Val quickly continued, hoping the students didn't notice her falter. "For example..." She dispelled the barrier on the target dummy and cast a tighter one, giving it the appearance of having a shiny pink coating.

"You could also cast a barrier around a smaller target, such as your hand," she said, casting such a barrier on her hand. She wiggled her fingers to show its flexibility. "In effect, this acts much like an impermeable glove. If I were to dip my finger in ink, for example," she continued, gingerly dipping a barrier-covered finger into an inkwell on the table, "the ink will stay on the barrier, and when I dispel the barrier," she said as she did so, showing the students a clean hand, "the ink is gone, never having touched my hand."

"So, these types of modifications can make barrier spells useful in much more than combat." Val carefully searched for the least uncomfortable wording as she continued. "We encourage you to make use of them in situations where the primary safety concern comes from direct contact, but you'd still like to be...as close as possible with your...target." She eyed the boys carefully, but could not tell whether they understood what she was getting at. "Is that all clear?" she asked tentatively.

Divayth nodded. Sotha Sil, however, was not quite there. He looked from his instructor to his apparently confident boyfriend and back with some unease, and then hesitantly spoke. "I understand and appreciate the theory here, but...I don't understand precisely why we're having this lesson."

Divayth opened his mouth to intercept Sil before Val could answer, but he couldn't quite get words out in time. He instead had to suppress a laugh as the professor began to speak.

"Oh, it's just College policy," she explained. "Of course, you're all adults, and we don't mean to interfere, but we've found that at least among Altmer, education in this area is...lacking. Perhaps Chimeri culture is more open with these things, but rather than try to guess who has had sufficient instruction, we've simply made it a policy to pull aside any new couples we notice for some lessons in...safe practices."

The explanation did nothing to help Sil understand. On the contrary, he was even more confused than before he had asked. "Couples...? I'm sorry, I don't understand the relevance..."

"Babe," Divayth said softly in Chimeris, taking Sil's hands in both of his own. "This is about sex."

Valsirenn didn't speak Chimeris, but from the widening of Sil's eyes and the reddening of his face, she could guess what Divayth had said.

"Is that cleared up then?" she asked, still cautiously, but nearly laughing now in spite of herself. Sil nodded, making even less than his usual amount of eye contact. "Any other questions?" They shook their heads.

"In that case, I think we're done here. Please remember that I and the rest of your professors are

always here in case you should find yourselves with any questions or concerns in the future. Otherwise, you're dismissed—uh, back to your regular lessons, though, boys. Leythen knows to expect you. No...uh, studying, please, until you've finished your regular duties for the day." She tried to give them a stern look, but a smile was breaking through.

Both of the Chimer were now red in the face, and they practically scrambled to get up, make some hasty bows and pleasantries, and return to their normal class.

As uncomfortable as Valsirenn found barrier lessons to be, she knew they were something that most Psijics went through at some point. In all reality, this rite of passage was probably part of what led to her acting as a surrogate parent and mentor to so many young Psijics (a bond which persisted long after graduation for those who stayed with the Order, although it eventually became more of a "mom friend" role).

She smiled fondly as she watched them leave and thought, *Two more sons for my ever-growing Psijic family.*

## End Notes

Idk if Valsirenn was really ever a professor, but I Decided she was, and that she's everyone's mom-friend and it's sad because she thinks she lost her whole family but she forgot how everyone is her kids.

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